

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00  
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01  
ACDA-07 IO-13 /071 W  
-----181927Z 066982 /44

O R 181824Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6230  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, IS  
SUBJECT: AN ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE COALITIONS

1. SPECULATION ON A FUTURE COALITION BEGAN AS SOON AS THE ELECTION TREND EMERGED EARLY THIS MORNING. WITHIN A FEW HOURS OF THE POLL'S CLOSING, LIKUD LEADER MENAHEM BEGIN PROPOSED IN WHAT APPEARED TO BE HIS VICTORY SPEECH A NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT (NUG). EARLIER, THIS MORNING FORMER LIKUD PARTY HEAD ELIMELECH RIMALT EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE LIKUD WOULD GO BEYOND THE RELIGIOUS PARTIES AND SHLOMZION IN SEEKING COALITION PARTNERS. HE SAID THAT A COALITION OF JUST THESE PARTIES WOULD BE "ASYMMETRICAL" AND THAT THE DMC AND EVEN THE ALIGNMENT SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO THE NEXT GOVERNMENT.

2. ALTHOUGH A MAJORITY COALITION OF THE LIKUD, THE THREE RELIGIOUS PARTIES AND THE SHLOMZION MAY BE MATHEMATICALLY POSSIBLE, THE LIKUD IS EXPECTED TO MAKE STRONG EFFORTS TO FORM AS BROAD A COALITION AS POSSIBLE UNDER IT  
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LEADERSHIP. HERUT LEADERS HAVE LONG SPOKEN OF A NUG IN THE EVENT OF A LIKUD VICTORY AT THE POLLS. BEGIN WOULD WANT TO AVOID HEADING A GOVERNMENT REGARDED AS EXTREME RIGHT WING. RIMALT'S REMARKS PROBABLY REFLECT THE LIBERAL PARTY'S EVEN STRONGER PREFERENCE FOR A BROAD-BASED GOVERNMENT. IN ADDITION TO SHARING BEGIN'S AVERSION TO THE LABEL OF A REACTIONARY REGIME,

THE LIBERALS WOULD BE UNCOMFORTABLE IN A GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THE NRP AND THE ULTRA-ORTHODOX FORCES WOULD HOLD THE BALANCE OF POWER. IN AN INTERVIEW TODAY, AGUDAH LEADER RABBI SHLOMO LORENCZ HAS LISTED THESE CONDITIONS FOR ENTERING A COALITION: CESSATION OF THE DRAFTING OF WOMEN INTO THE IDF; ABOLITION OF ABORTIONS AND POST MORTEMES; CHANGING THE LAW ON "WHO IS A JEW;" AND REVOKING PERMITS TO WORK ON THE SABBATH. (THESE ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE LIBERAL PARTY WING OF LIKUD) NOR TO POTENTIAL NON-RELIGIOUS COALITION PARTNERS)

3. AT THE SAME TIME, YIGAEI YADIN WAS QUOTED AS AGAIN DESCRIBING AS IMMUTABLE HIS PARTY'S SEVEN CONDITIONS FOR DMC PARTICIPATION IN A GOVERNMENT (TEL AVIV 3166). HE CALLED THEM PRINCIPLES WITHOUT WHICH DMC-DEMANDED CHANGES WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. THE DMC, WHICH OFFICIALLY REGARDS RELIGION AS A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE AND WILL NOT DICTATE TO ITS MKS ON RELIGIOUS MATTERS, WOULD BE EVEN LESS CONGENIAL TO THE AGUDAH PARTIES THAN THE LIBERALS.

4. IF THERE ARE MAJOR OBSTACLES IN THE DMC JOINING A LIKUD-LED COALITION, THE PROBLEMS FOR THE ALIGNMENT BECOMING PART OF SUCH A GOVERNMENT APPEAR EVEN GREATER. THE MOVE WOULD NOT ONLY DISSOLVE THE ALIGNMENT, IT COULD WELL SPLIT THE LABOR PARTY. MANY ACHDUT AVODAH STALWARTS, AS WELL AS DOVES THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE PARTY, WOULD FIND SERVING IN A LIKUD-DOMINATED COALITION TOO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MUCH TO SWALLOW. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH US THIS MORNING ALIGNMENT LEADERS USED SUCH TERMS AS "SUICIDAL" AND "HUMILIATING" IN DESCRIBING POSSIBLE ALIGNMENT PARTICIPATION IN A LIKUD COALITION. INDEED, MANY BELIEVE A PERIOD IN OPPOSITION COULD WELL GIVE THE PARTY ITS MUCH NEEDED REJUVENATION.

5. THERE IS WIDESPREAD FEELING WITHIN THE LABOR PARTY AND THE HISTADRUT THAT THE PARTY AND TRADE UNION MACHINERY HAS FAILED THEM AND NEEDS A THOROUGH OVERHAUL. SOME REMARKED THAT THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION HAD BEEN DECEPTIVE; INSTEAD OF A DEMONSTRATION IN DEMOCRACY, IT WAS A GATHERING OF APPARATCHIKS WHO IN FACT REPRESENTED ONLY VERY NARROW BASE. WHEN THE TIME CAME TO DELIVER, THEY FAILED.

6. THE OTHER HORN OF THE ALIGNMENT'S DILEMMA IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT IN OPPOSITION ITS STRENGTH COULD CONTINUE TO ERODE TO THE BENEFIT OF THE DMC.

THE CONCERN IS THAT THE DMC'S POWER OF PATRONAGE SHOULD IT BE PART OF THE COALITION, WOULD BE CORROSIVE ON THE ALIGNMENT'S CONSTITUENCY. THIS EVEN MORE SO IF THE ALIGNMENT FAILS TO MAINTAIN ITS MAJORITY IN NEXT MONTH'S HISTRADUT ELECTION.

7. THE OUTLOOK IS THAT THE ALIGNMENT WILL RESIST BLANDISHMENTS TO JOINING A NUG AND PERHAPS TRY TO PREVENT THE LIKUD FROM FORMING A GOVERNMENT OR, MORE LIKELY, DO ITS BEST TO KEEP A LIKUD GOVERNMENT AS NARROW AS POSSIBLE. THESE EFFORTS WOULD BE PREDICATED ON THE HOPE THAT IN ANOTHER EARLY ELECTION THE ALIGNMENT WOULD RECOUP AT LEAST PART OF ITS LOSSES. (TO MANY YESTERDAY'S LIKUD VICTORY REPRESENTED A PROTEST VOTE WHICH IS NOT LIKELY TO BE REPEATED UNLESS THE LIKUD CAN ACHIEVE POSITIVE RESULTS AND ESTABLISH A GOOD RECORD FOR ITSELF.) BY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAME TOKEN WE BELIEVE THAT THE LIKUD WILL PULL ALL STOPS TO HAMMER OUT A COALITION KNOWING THAT IT MAY NOT SOON HAVE A SECOND CHANCE TO PROVE ITS METTLE. WITH RETURNS STILL COMING IN, IT IS OUR ESTIMATE THAT THE LIKUD WILL BE ABLE TO FORM A GOVERNMENT EITHER WITH THE RELIGIOUS PARTIES AND ONE OR TWO SPLINTER PARTIES ALONE OR ONE THAT WOULD ALSO INCLUDE THE DMC, BUT THE PROCESS WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE SEVERAL WEEKS AT BEST.

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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